

## ***Sample Wildland Fire Questionnaire used for public input.***

### **Community Questionnaire Wildland Fire Hazard and Fire Safe Education Programs Power County, Idaho**

To reduce the risk of wildfires, Power County is initiating a County Wide Wildfire Mitigation Plan. The plan seeks to reduce the threat of wildland fire through risk assessment and hazard identification. Mitigation measure will include but are not limited to wildfire prevention and reduction of fuels, increasing fire protection capabilities of communities, and public education. The goal of the program is to decrease the chances of wildfire spreading from public lands onto private or community lands and vice-versa. You can help in this County-wide effort by providing information and suggestions on potential assessment and mitigation efforts. This questionnaire is being conducted on behalf of the Power County Commissioners by Dynamac Corporation (1551 Delmar Circle, Idaho Falls, ID 83404).

You may either mail this questionnaire to the address provided; or you may drop it off at the Power County EMS building (560 N. Oregon Train, American falls), or at your local fire department.

Fold on lines, staple and apply stamp.

Dynamac Corp.  
1551 Delmar Circle  
Idaho Falls, ID 83404

Place  
Stamp  
Here

Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan  
Dynamac Corp.  
1551 Delmar Circle  
Idaho Falls, ID 83404

1. What town or community do you live in or closest to? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How great a risk do you think wildfires pose to your residence? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What areas around your community do you think are an extreme fire hazard and pose a wildfire risk to homes or property? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What do you think might be the best way to mitigate, or reduce this hazard?

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5. Do you know of any recent actions taken by the community, the county, etc., to reduce the risk of wildland fires or to protect residents from wildfires spreading from public land to private?

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6. Have there been recent fire reduction education programs in your community? If so, what was the nature of the projects?

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Who sponsored them and when?

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7. Besides residences and community buildings, are there other locations or properties (may or may not be a structure) that have a high environmental, cultural, or economic value and should be a priority for fire risk reduction?

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8. Do you think your community is prepared to combat wildland-urban interface fires?

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If not, what do you think could be done to improve your town's/ subdivision's wildland-urban interface firefighting capabilities?

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If we have questions or would like more information, can we contact you?

Name:

Address:

Phone:

***Thank you for your time and your ideas!***

## **Team Meeting #1**

On June 30, 2003 the Wildland Fire and VFD/Structure branches of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project team met from 3:00-5:15 PM in the EMS building (560 N Oregon Trail) at American Falls. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Identify positions in Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Group Organization-Group Supervisors
- Liaisons, administrators, team leads, coordinators
- Develop Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan Priorities
- Identify Resources needed for the Power County Wildfire Plan

Attending the meeting were:

Robinson, David  
Page, Dennis  
Judd, Fred  
Bishop, Gary  
Ferguson, Gary  
Love, Mark  
Estep, Ken  
Zimmerman, Ray  
West, Buck  
Bass, Jeff

Rockland Fire Dept.  
Idaho Department of Lands  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Forest Service  
A.F. Fire Dept.  
Power Co. Disaster Services  
Commission chairman  
Commissioner  
Dynamac Corp.  
Dynamac Corp.

Buck West opened the meeting with a brief review of the objectives. Jeff Bass then reviewed why we were here and brief discussion of the purpose of a Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan. A question was raised about why the plan was being written at the County level and not the individual community level? Jeff pointed out that the Idaho implementation of the National Fire Plan identified the county as the unit of management. Further discussion also indicated that there had been some attempt to use smaller management units and that it quickly became overwhelming and unmanageable.

Jeff then asked the participants for some of their objective for participation in the planning effort. Those objectives included:

- Identify the need for Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between fire organizations for the coordination and back fill of resources when needed. This is especially needed in areas not covered by existing fire control jurisdiction.
- Identify provisions for reimbursing fire departments for fighting fires in another jurisdiction. (Fred Judd noted that there is such an agreement covering Federal and State grounds in American falls and Chubbuck. It does not cover any other areas.)
- Identify the need for public education on insurance ramifications.
- Identify the need for additional emergency plans in the County. (Jeff Bass noted that this plan can identify the need for such efforts, but will not actually write individual community emergency plans.)

- Ensure that the whole County is covered by some basic fire protection.

Buck West reviewed the following proposed outline for the plan:

- Adoption by the Power County Commissioners,
  - As recommended by the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Group
- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Profile of Power County
- Hazard Identification, Vulnerability, Risk
- Hazard Location and Description
- Hazard Potential and Trends
- Hazard Prioritization, Mitigation Goals
- Wildfire Mitigation Strategy and Implementation
- Wildfire Mitigation Plan Maintenance
- Continued Public Involvement
- Appendix
  - A-Maps
  - B-Charts
  - C-Public Participation/Planning Process Documentation
  - D-Benefit Cost Analysis
  - E-List of Acronyms
  - F-Financial/Technical Resources

The plan is basically in two parts. The first part is hazard identification and the second part is mitigation measures. Jeff stressed that the plan is designed to not only meet the current wildfire mitigation needs, but is also intended to easily plug into future planning efforts coming up in the next few years (e.g. FEMA disaster planning). While intended to be a simple plan it is probable that the document may run 40 to 60 pages in length in order to adequately address current and future planning needs.

The project schedule was then discussed. July and August will be spent in hazard identification and vulnerability assessments. In September and October the team will focus on mitigation goals and measures. The November and December time will be spent on prioritizing the mitigation measures and finalizing the plan. The County Commissioners expect a final document, ready for their signatures, by December 22, 2003.

The organization of the WFMP team was discussed. A modified Incident Command Structure (ICS) was used to organize this team. The structure will help organize the flow of information up and down the structure tree. Members of each branch are responsible for collecting information and data and transferring it up the structure for combination with the other branches information. The branch members are also responsible for disseminating information out to the people and organizations they represent.

Jeff then discussed the need for liaisons between this planning effort and

1. Idaho Department of Fish and Game
2. County Planning and Zoning (for coordination with planning ordinances and county comprehensive plan)
3. County Assessor (for assessing values at risk)

Jeff presented a slide with suggested priorities for the planning effort. These priorities would help form the basis for prioritizing the hazards and the mitigation actions. The team agreed that the priority order should be:

1. Life
2. Property (homes, cropland, infrastructure, etc.)
3. Resources (timber, watershed, rangeland, and other natural resources)
4. Values (scenic, historical, cultural, etc.)
  - Public Awareness
  - Emergency Services
  - Partnerships

The group discussed some of the data needs for the plan. Everyone was encouraged to begin assessing hazards in their area of responsibility. A copy of a questionnaire was handed out as a possible way to collect information and input from interested stakeholders. Buck West stressed that we want to keep our focus on the hazard assessment at this time. People will want to jump to the mitigation recommendations, however, we need a sound hazard assessment in order to support and prioritize any recommendations. Specifics of the discussion include:

- A historic fire occurrence map will depict the location and area of Type-3 fires or larger for a specified time period. *(Note: Fred Judd that he would have the fire history maps, at least for State and Federal lands in time for the next meeting.)*
- A historic ignition map will depict the location of all fires for a specified time period (similar to a lightning strike map).
- Infrastructure items will be located on a map for GIS entry (GPS location coordinates of infrastructure elements are optional).
- Need an Arbon homeowner representative to address their lack of fire coverage by any jurisdiction.

There was some discussion on the work being done for the State of Idaho by the Jeff Jones Consulting group. They have been contracted to map the fire hazards for the entire state. There was concern that their preliminary results may indicate there is a low hazard potential in Power Co. Jeff Bass will look into what they are doing, how it may affect the Power Co. plan, and identify actions to address any potential conflicts.

## **Team Meeting #2**

On July 17, 2003 the Wildland Fire, VFD/Structure, Liaisons, and Private Land branches of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project team met from 3:00-4:30 PM in the EMS building (560 N Oregon Trail) at American Falls. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Purpose of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (PWFMP)
- Present the (PWFMP) Organization and Roles
- Present and discuss the planning schedule
- Discuss the Wildfire Mitigation Plan Priorities
- Discuss current needs/actions for the PWFMP
- Discuss public involvement
- Set date for next meeting

Attending the meeting were:

Barclay, J.	Idaho Power Company
Beitia, Tony	Sawtooth National Forest
Bishop, Gary	U.S. Forest Service
Burgemeister, Arnold	American Falls Rural Fire Dept.
Dekker, Bill	Fort Hall Fire Dept.
Fagnant, Kenneth	Bureau of Disaster Services
Fincher, Paul	Williams Gas Co.
Hayden, Hans	
Judd, Fred	Bureau of Land Management
Love, Mark	
Meadows, Vicki	Power Co. Commissioner
Mende, Jim	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Miller, Merlin	Chubbick Fire Dept.
Orgill, Barry	Williams Gas Co.
Reinke, Tim	Utah Power
Ward, Vance	
West, William	Dynamac Corp.

Vicki Meadows, Power County Commissioner, opened the meeting with a brief history of why the County is developing a Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) and the selection of Dynamac Corp. as a contractor to develop the plan. Buck West then ran through a slide presentation outlining the planning purpose, organization and schedule. Those slides can be found at the end of this report.

The plan is basically in two parts. The first part is hazard identification and the second part is mitigation measures. Buck stressed that the plan is designed to not only meet the current wildfire mitigation needs, but is also intended to easily plug into future planning efforts coming up in the next few years (e.g. FEMA disaster planning). While intended to be a simple plan it is probable that the document may run 40 to 60 pages in length in order to adequately address current and future planning needs.

During discussion of the project schedule a question was raised about the ability to meet the schedule with all the time requirements necessary under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Fred Judd responded that even though the plan was being done with Federal grant money there was no requirement to conduct NEPA analysis on the

development of the plan. Once the plan is completed and accepted by the county commissioners, any work done on Federal land or using Federal money will fully comply with all environmental requirements. Specifically, the BLM will complete any NEPA analysis required.

Buck West stressed that we want to keep our focus on the hazard assessment at this time. People will want to jump to the mitigation recommendations, however, we need a sound hazard assessment in order to support and prioritize any recommendations.

Fred Judd presented a map with all fire occurrences in Power County from 1956 through 2001. The occurrences were broken down into human and natural caused on Federal or State lands only. Discussion of the map pointed out that the rural and volunteer fire departments will need to develop such a map for fires within their jurisdiction. Fred was asked if he could generate a fire area map for the same time period for class 3 fires or larger, and also a vegetation map. Fred said he would check into the request.

Discussion turned to public participation in the planning effort. The following suggestions were made for involving the public in the planning effort:

- Use fire incidents to explain the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) and to suggest local meetings with the public. It was stressed that County officials need to be in front of the press at fire incidents to discuss the importance of the mitigation planning and to solicit public input.
- Convene a small group of people (approximately 10 participants) at different parts of the County (probably based on fire districts) to discuss wildland fire hazards and brainstorm mitigation measures.
- Have the County commissioners sponsor a booth at the county fair (August 7 and 8) to present the WFMP, gather public input (use the questionnaire handed out at the June 30 meeting), and distribute fire safety and protection materials.
- Conduct general County-wide public participation activities after there is a draft WFMP the public can respond to and comment on.

Other items discussed during the meeting:

- ISU is preparing a GIS fuels mapping study of Power Co. funded by the BLM. The University has just completed a similar study for Bannock Co. Keith Webber is the contact at ISU for this information.
- The team requested that URL for the Idaho Department of Lands web site for fire mitigation planning be sent to all team members.
- The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes are currently doing some vegetation treatment activities on the reservation and want to make sure their activities and the WFMP don't contradict each other. Because the reservation covers several counties the Tribes will have to make a decision about participation in each individual County plan or to do a single reservation plan encompassing portions of several counties and integrating with the individual county plans.

- Communication in the Arbon valley area is a concern. There are several private radio networks in the valley but no single valley-wide network (transmitter station rental fees on Federal lands are now prohibitively expensive). Development of a valley-wide communications network, one that can be accessed by private citizens in the valley, would greatly improve fire response in the valley.
- A question was raised about BLM rules regarding private initial suppression activities of fires on Public Lands that threaten private land. These rules and guidelines need to be addressed in the WFMP so there is clear guidance to all involved in such actions.
- Concerns were expressed about the condition of vegetation on land in the CRP program.

Fred Judd suggested that the major federal (BLM and FS), state agencies (IDL), and Shoshone/Bannock Tribes managing lands within the county and for the rural and volunteer fire departments meet to locate on a map(s) the fire hazard areas within the county and other items of interest. All agreed that this meeting will be an excellent opportunity to gather, in a very short time, some of the information needed for the hazard assessment section of the plan. The meeting was scheduled for next Thursday, July 24, 2003, from 0900 to 1100 hours in the EMS building, second floor conference room. Others are welcome to attend if they have time and interest.

### ***Public Meeting #1***

On August 14, 2003, the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project team met from 3:00-5:00 PM in the Arbon School basement at Arbon, ID. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Briefly discuss any information resulting from the wildland fire booth at the county fair.
- Proof the GIS map drawn from the topographic maps prepared on July 24(from Fred Judd).
- Compare the 7/24 map with the fire risk zones map from the ISU web site for rangeland fire.
- Review the fire area for class 3 or greater fire (from Fred Judd).
- Review some of the map information from the Jeff Jones study.
- Draw the fire protection districts on a map for digitizing into GIS.
- Draw communication tower locations and area coverage on a map for digitizing into GIS.
- Identify areas to conduct NFPA 1144 wildfire checklist reviews.
- Discuss actions for identifying values at risk in the county.

Attending the meeting were:

Adams, Stu  
Anderson, Lynn  
Bass, Jeff

Dynamac, Inc.  
Bradley, Willard  
Curry, Bill



Curry, Rexdaze  
Dekker, Bill  
Fort Hall Fire Dept.  
Edwards, Lowell  
Fagnant, Kenneth  
Bureau of Disaster Services  
Haskin, Don  
Power County Highway Dist.  
Hayden, Hans  
Judd, Fred  
Bureau of Land Management  
Lewis, Linda  
Love, Mark  
Lusk, David  
Lusk, Steve

Meadows, Vicki  
Power Co. Commissioner  
Melton, Jim  
Dynamac Corp.  
Miller, Merlin  
Chubbick Fire Dept.  
Rerce, Ron  
Sheppard, Scott  
Tinno, Harvey  
Ward, Vance  
West, William  
Dynamac Corp.  
Wright, Gregory  
Zwiesler, Steve

The meeting opened with introductions. From 1500 to 1600 hours the meeting focused on the activities of the Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan group.

One question discussed at the last meeting was what the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe intended to do since the reservation lands encompassed parts of five counties. Bill Dekker said the Tribe intends to do their own WFMP involving all the Counties impacted by the reservation. The tribe will actively participate on this plan including making mitigation recommendations for areas on the reservation. Buck West noted that the Tribes participation on the Power County plan is welcomed and appreciated, but it is clearly understood that this plan will have no authority for recommendations on the reservation.

Fred Judd was asked to report on the wildfire prevention booth at the County fair. The booth was set up for August 8 and 9, from mid morning to mid afternoon. The turnout was disappointing, however, several people pointed out that the majority of people attended the fair in the late afternoon and early evening. Plans are to set up another booth for American Falls days on August 16. The main attraction at American Falls days will be the Bar-B-Q about noon and the booth should be manned during this time to draw the most people. Fred will coordinate the booth and make sure they cover the Bar-B-Q.

The group then reviewed the hazard map developed on July 24 by Fred Judd and the VFD leads. Fred explained how the map was developed. The July 24 map was compared to a fire hazard map developed at ISU and posted on their GIS web site. Those present pointed out several omissions on the July 24 map, and the omissions were noted on the map. Participants were encouraged to mark any information they believe is important to the plan, including communication sites and networks, on the maps.

From 1600 to 1700 hours approximately fifteen residents from Arbon valley showed up to discuss the mitigation plan. The purpose and benefits of the plan, the structure of the planning team, and the progress to date was briefly reviewed with the new attendees. It

was stressed that the current focus of the planning team was to identify the wildland fire hazard in the county. The next step will be to identify the values at risk from wildland fire and finally to identify and prioritize mitigation measures to reduce the hazards on those values at risk. The earlier discussion of the July 24 fire hazard map was briefly reviewed and the participants were asked for comments on the map. Participants were invited to share any information or concerns regarding wildland fires or to ask any questions about the mitigation plan or process.

Much of the conversation dealt with mitigation measures and things the residents believed were needed to help protect the valley from wildland fire. General points of interest from that discussion include:

- There were questions about the cost of fire insurance versus the cost of a taxing district for fire protection.
- It was suggested that Power Company employees driving along the transmission lines have started some fires in the county.
- Arbon valley is in a lightning belt that draws a lot of lightning. There is a pattern where the thunderstorms build on the desert and then dump their lightning along the foothills and in Arbon valley.
- CRP lands are a high hazard area because of the type and volume of fuels. It was estimated that 37% of the County is in CRP.
- A suggestion was made to start the next meeting with a firewise presentation before starting into the WFMP agenda.
- The houses along Mink Creek are in a high hazard Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) because the interface involves larger fuel types such as trees.

Possible mitigation measures identified for when the planning effort reaches that point include:

- Consider joining forces of fire protection districts and forming a County-wide protection district.
- Establish a sub station in Arbon valley. This will require the establishment of a fire protection district and a tax to support the district.
  - The establishment of a fire protection district in Arbon valley should reduce fire insurance rates. Will need to do a comparison between the cost of the fire protection tax versus the reduction in insurance costs. How much will a substation cost?
- There is a one-mile gap between the American Falls and the Rockland fire protection districts. This gap needs to be corrected and the lines adjusted to provide full coverage.
- Provide firefighting training to the Arbon valley residents.
- Identify fuel reduction work in the county as part of this mitigation plan.
- Provide for emergency power for water sources. When the power goes out in a fire there is no way to pump well water to fight the fire.
- Identify mitigation measures for protecting power poles during wildland fire events.

- Establish a central water tank, pumper truck or pumper trailer that can be used by anyone on Arbon valley to fight wildfires.

A major topic of discussion was the lack of communication in the valley. Private communication networks have been dropped because of the high cost of Rights-of-Way for repeater stations on Federal lands. This means there is no way to provide communication coverage for the valley. Communication is an issue not just for fire mitigation, but is also important for all other disaster needs (snow, accident, etc.). Hans Hayden presented a map of locations (GPS coordinates included) in the Valley that would be potential locations for cell phone towers that would provide good coverage for the valley. Hans also noted that Clark and Teton communications companies have been in discussion with local governments about placing a cell tower to serve Arbon valley. Harvey said the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe may be interested in providing a possible site on the reservation if the all the details can be worked out. Mark Love suggested we establish a sub-committee with Harvey Tinno, Mark Love, Hans Hayden, Don Haskin and Bill Dekker to look into the communications issue (it is assumed that Mark would head this sub-committee).

The residents were encouraged to stay involved in the planning process. There was a request for access to the drafts of the WFMP as they become available. Suggestions were made for posting information and drafts on the Power County web site and providing paper copies at strategic locations within the county. The meeting adjourned about 5:00 PM, however several residents stayed until almost 6:00 PM to individually discuss any issues and ideas.

## ***Public Meeting #2***

On October 8 the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project held a public “Open House” from 6:00-8:00 PM in the Rockland Public building in Rockland, ID. The objectives of the “Open House” were to:

- Present the purpose of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (PWFPMP)
- Present the (PWFPMP) Organization and Roles
- Present and discuss the planning schedule
- Discuss the Wildfire Mitigation Plan Priorities
- Discuss issues associated with wildland fires in Power County
- Identify and discuss potential mitigation measures

Attending the meeting were:

Barker, Rowan  
Barnard, Charles  
Brady, Jerry  
Crofts, Mark  
Fagnant, Kenneth  
Bureau of Disaster Services

Fillmore, Larry  
Fillmore, Liz  
Hansen, Eddy  
Hurd, Gary  
Hurd, Judith  
Judd, Fred

Bureau of Land Management  
 Kariger, James  
 Love, Mark  
 Mathews, Mike  
 Mathews, Rosann  
 May, Breanna  
 May, Leonard  
 May, Robert  
 McHargue, Dan  
 McLean, Cindy  
 McLean, James  
 Meadows, Vicki  
 Power Co. Commissioner  
 Moss, Anita

Nelson, Gene  
 Nelson, Richard  
 Nelson, Ron  
 Payne, John  
 Permann, Alan  
 Robinson, James  
 Sjelín, Paul  
 Smith, Jeremy  
 Steed, Bruce  
 Trugh, Ray  
 Wagner, Robin  
 Wagner, Steve  
 Wegner, Robin  
 Wilson, Kip

The meeting opened with a video on wildland fires and defensible space followed by a brief slide presentation by Buck West on the status of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan. After the slide presentation the rest of the meeting was spent in open discussion, questions and answers.

- An issue with CRP land is that any burning to remove vegetation has to be completed by March 30 of each year. This is too early to get a good burn.
  - A suggested mitigation measure would be to extend that date to later in the year.
- The VFD should know where and what kind of equipment is available from private citizens.
  - Where are tractors and discs are available.
  - Have standing rental agreements for the use of the equipment.
- The VFD needs a new water truck.
- BLM land is overloaded with vegetation that provides a big fuel source for wildland fire.
  - A suggested mitigation would be to do some vegetation treatment on Public land.
- The area around Highway 37 is s concern from the number of fires that occur along that route.
- Concern about fires starting along power lines.
- Access to water sources is a concern in Rockland valley.
  - Suggested mitigation actions:
    - Have full water tanker scattered throughout the county.
    - Identify and document water sources available at farms and homes in the valley.
    - Need emergency power sources for critical water sources.
    - Place Dry Hydrants along some of the creeks.
- There is a concern about timber slash piles remaining in areas after timber harvest activities. We need to clean up those piles.

- Rockland VFD needs a new building to house its fire equipment (current building is rented from the city of Rockland).
  - To be rated as fire district the equipment has to be sheltered in a building and can not be left out in the open.
  - Possible mitigation may be to rent shelter from farmers in some of the outlying areas.
- Need satellite building with equipment scattered in the valley to provide quicker response to some of the outlying areas.
- There were questions about how the county wants to structure its fire protection coverage.
  - Expand existing districts.
  - Combine existing districts.
  - Provide a single countywide district. A suggestion was made to investigate the recent fire district changes conducted in Franklin and Teton counties to see how they did it and learn from their experiences.
- Need to make sure there is a good link between the development of a larger fire protection district and the need for additional equipment and training.
- Need more volunteers, training and equipment to fight fires.
- Communication in the southern portion of Rockland valley is a concern.
- Need training on wildland firefighting and also how to communicate and interact with BLM/FS fire crews.
- There is a concern about the propane tank at the Rockland school being vulnerable to wildland fires.

### ***Public Meeting #3***

On October 16, 2003an “Open House” was held for the public in American Falls. The “Open House” was held from 6:30-8:30 PM in the Hillcrest Grade School. The objectives of the “Open House” were the same as for the Rockland meeting. Attending the meeting were:

Barnard, Virgil

Bass, Jeff

Dynamac, Inc.

Fagnant, Kenneth

Bureau of Disaster Services

Judd, Fred

Bureau of Land Management

Landvik, Jilynn

Love, Mark

McMaster, Sigrid

Meadows, Vicki

Power Co. Commissioner

Melton, Jim

Dynamac Corp.

Williams, T. J.

Zimmerman, Ray

Power Co. Commissioner

The meeting opened with a brief slide presentation by Buck West on the status of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (see below for a copy of the slides). After the slide presentation the rest of the meeting was spent in open discussion, questions and answers.

- Concern with vegetation in the River Bend area. The sagebrush comes right up to the houses.
  - There are concerns with erosion in the area if the vegetation is improperly removed.
  - The area receives high recreation use that contributes to increased chance of wildland fire ignitions.
  - A suggested mitigation may be increased patrolling by fire crews, increased signage of the area and development of more fire pit for recreationists.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to implement building codes to address fire hazards (e.g., specifying building materials for roofs and siding, access requirements for fire fighting equipment, water supply needs, etc.).
  - Is the fire hazard serious enough to justify these types of codes?
  - Considering implementing these suggestions as construction guidelines instead of building codes.
- Concerns with access and emergency evacuation conditions in portions of the county.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to locate and inventory all the homes in the county.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to provide assistance ( in the form of money or other assistance) to residents (primarily in the Rockland area) to convert of cover roofs and siding that are highly susceptible (e.g., shake roofs and old wood siding) to wildland fires.
  - Chemical treatment may be an option.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to conduct door-to-door homeowner education programs.
  - Could involve the local youth or BLM fire crews.
  - May also consider involvement as a local scout program such as using a scout pack to clear a defensible space around some demonstration homes.
- Concern that the Garden Grove area is short on water for wildland fire fighting.
  - A suggested mitigation measure may to store a water truck or tank in the area for fire fighting purposes.
  - May be able to coordinate something through the local home owners association.
  - A suggested mitigation measure may be to have the Garden Grove homeowners association participate in the 5-step firewise community program.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to conduct neighborhood cleanup projects.
- Is there a need to prioritize areas in the county for fire suppression (e.g., is there more value in the cropland than in the barn).
  - This may be best left to the local fire department knowledge of their area.
- It may be appropriate to consider the fire protection district in the county and make changes to that coverage.

- Concern that if there is countywide protection district then all the recourses in the county will go to American Falls because that is were the voting strength is in the county.
- Could consider the use of a fire commission with even representation from all party.
- A suggested mitigation measure may be to form new protection districts with contracting to existing districts.
- This plan may only be able to suggest the development of a commission to address changes in fire districts.

### ***Team Meeting #3***

On October 30, 2003 the Wildland Fire and VFD/Structure branches of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project team met from 3:00-5:00 PM in the EMS building (560 N Oregon Trail) at American Falls. The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Review and discuss some elements of the hazard section of the plan.
2. Review the proposed mitigation measures from the public meetings and begin brainstorming additional measures.

Attending the meeting were:

Fagnant, Kenneth  
Bureau of Disater Services  
Haskin, Don  
Power County Highway Dist.  
Hayden, Hans  
Judd, Fred  
Bureau of Land Management  
Love, Mark

Meadows, Vicki  
Power Co. Commissioner  
Reinke, Tim  
Utah Power  
Tinno, Harvey  
West, William  
Dynamac Corp.

The meeting opened with a brief review of the activities of the past month, especially the public meetings in Rockland and American Falls. The group then discussed the fire history for inclusion in the hazard section of the plan. Several recent fires were identified during the discussion.

The most recent large fires to impact Power County and its residents occurred in 2000. During the summer of 2000, a severe dry lightening storm passed through the county igniting several fires in the county and particularly within the Shoshone-Bannock reservation. The result was four major fires that eventually combined into a single Eastern Idaho Complex fire. Fires within the complex were:

- Moonshine Fire (greater than 30,000 acres)
- Rattle Snake Fire (? acres)
- Fisher Creek Fire (greater than 37,000 acres)
- Coldwater Fire (? acres)

Also in 2000, but not part of the complex fire described above, was the Flat Top fire. This fire eventually burned over 55,000 acres of which 15,000 were in Power County. In 1996, the Cox Wells fire ignited in the northern portion of the county on Public land and eventually burned over 219,000 acres. Both fires were lightning caused.

Traditionally lightning causes 51% of the fires within Eastern Idaho and 49% are human caused. Additionally, there were numerous small fires started by farm equipment working in the fields. These fires were numerous in numbers, but small in size due to the inability of the farmed fields to carry a fire and because the farmers would extinguish the fires as quickly as they would start. With the inclusion of previously farmed fields into the CRP program there has been fewer fires started by farm equipment. While the number of fires on fields/CRP land has gone down, the potential for larger, more catastrophic fires has increased. This is due to the increased fuel load on CRP lands and the absence of farmers in the field to stop fires before they become large.

The pattern of wildfire burns was also discussed. Fires in the northern portion of the County traditional burn in a southwest to northeast pattern in accordance with the prevailing wind patterns. In the Arbon and Rockland portions of the County there is no prevailing burn pattern as the valleys cause unpredictable wind vortex.

The team then began a general discussion of some of the potential mitigation measures identified at the public meetings. These mitigations were grouped into larger categories.

#### **General Mitigation**

1. Identify and document water sources available at farms and homes in the valley.
2. Need emergency power sources for critical water sources.
3. Place Dry Hydrants along some of the creeks.
4. There is a concern about timber slash piles remaining in areas after timber harvest activities. We need to clean up those piles.
5. Need more volunteers, training and equipment to fight fires.
6. Need training on wildland firefighting and also how to communicate and interact with BLM/FS fire crews.
7. A suggested mitigation may be increased patrolling by fire crews, increased signage of the area and development of more fire pit for recreationists. The pipeline campground is a big concern.
  - May also need to do some vegetation treatment e.g. mowing
  - Mary's mine campground is also a concern for fires.
8. A suggested mitigation measure may be to implement building codes to address fire hazards (e.g., specifying building materials for roofs and siding, access requirements for fire fighting equipment, water supply needs, etc.).
9. A suggested mitigation measure may be to locate and inventory all the homes in the county.
  - Utilize the red zone program.
10. A suggested mitigation measure may be to provide assistance (in the form of money or other assistance) to residents (primarily in the Rockland area) to convert of cover roofs and siding that are highly susceptible (e.g., shake roofs and old wood siding) to wildland fires.



11. A suggested mitigation measure may be to conduct door-to-door homeowner education programs. Could involve the local youth or BLM fire crews.
12. May also consider involvement as a local scout program such as using a scout pack to clear a defensible space around some demonstration homes.
13. A suggested mitigation measure may be to have the Garden Grove homeowners association participate in the 5-step firewise community program.
14. Develop escape routes for the Garden Grove area.
15. Develop an evacuation plan for the entire county.
16. A suggested mitigation measure may be to conduct neighborhood cleanup projects.
17. Is there a need to prioritize areas in the county for fire suppression (e.g., is there more value in the cropland than in the barn).
18. Provide firefighting training to the Arbon valley residents.
19. Provide for emergency power for water sources. When the power goes out in a fire there is no way to pump well water to fight the fire.
20. Identify mitigation measures for protecting power poles during wildland fire events.
  - Access to protect the poles.

Treatment of poles (e.g. alum around the base of poles to prevent burning.)

21. Implement the REDZONE software in the county.

### **Fire Districts**

1. Expand existing districts.
2. Combine existing districts.
3. Provide a single countywide district. A suggestion was made to investigate the recent fire district changes conducted in Franklin and Teton counties to see how they did it and learn from their experiences.
4. Could consider the use of a fire commission with even representation from all parts of the county.
5. A suggested mitigation measure may be to form new protection districts with contracting to existing districts.
6. Consider joining forces of fire protection districts and forming a County-wide protection district.
7. The establishment of a fire protection district in Arbon valley should reduce fire insurance rates. Will need to do a comparison between the cost of the fire protection tax versus the reduction in insurance costs. How much will a substation cost?
8. There is a one-mile gap between the American Falls and the Rockland fire protection districts. This gap needs to be corrected and the lines adjusted to provide full coverage.

### **Fire Fighting Equipment**

1. The VFD should know where and what kind of equipment is available from private citizens.
2. The VFD needs a new water truck.
3. Have full water tanker scattered throughout the county.
4. A suggested mitigation measure may to store a water truck or tank in the area for fire fighting purposes.
5. Establish a central water tank, pumper truck or pumper trailer that can be used by anyone on Arbon valley to fight wildfires.

### **Communication Networks**

1. Communication in the southern portion of Rockland valley is a concern.

2. Place a cell tower in Arbon valley. If not a cell tower then some form of communication that can cover the area.
  - The cell provides more coverage for more people and is not limited to those who have radios.

### **Vegetation Treatment**

1. A suggested mitigation would be to do some vegetation treatment on Public land where it interfaces with private.
2. Identify fuel reduction work in the county as part of this mitigation plan.
3. Treatment on CRP land to reduce the fire potential and to help in control once fire starts.
  - CRP won't burn in the spring because it is too green
  - Will need to closely coordinate with the Fish and Game for any actions on CRP land
  - The guidelines are too late for burning
4. Treatment (either burning, annual mowing, spraying) of RR RW to reduce the number of fire starts. May also be appropriate around power poles.
  - Lowering the fuel levels around poles to reduce the fire load.
  - Elimination of noxious weeds around the base of poles.

### **Fire Station Locations**

1. Shoshone-Bannock Equipment stationed between Pauline and the Interstate (e.g. rattlesnake).
2. BLM may place a station in American Falls
3. Need satellite building with equipment scattered in the valley to provide quicker response to some of the outlying areas.
4. Establish a sub station in Arbon valley. This will require the establishment of a fire protection district and a tax to support the district.
5. Rockland VFD needs a new building to house its fire equipment (current building is rented from the city of Rockland).

During the discussion of the mitigation measures there were questions about why and how the measures would be prioritized. There are currently over 40 suggested mitigation measures in the list (see above) and more will probably be identified in the coming weeks. Prioritization is needed to focus attention in this plan on a “short list” of mitigation measures for detailed development.

### **Team Meeting #4**

On December 18, 2003 the Wildland Fire and VFD/Structure branches of the Power County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan (WFMP) project team met from 3:00-5:00 PM in the EMS building (560 N Oregon Trail) at American Falls. The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Discuss prioritization of the eleven identified issues against the plan goals.
2. Review the format for presentation of the proposed mitigation measures that address the hazards.
3. Make assignments for development of the detailed mitigation measures..

Attending the meeting were:

Fagnant, Kenneth  
Bureau of Disaster Services  
Grosswiller, Don  
Bureau of Land Management  
Hayden, Hans  
Judd, Fred  
Bureau of Land Management  
Love, Mark

Melton, Jim  
Dynamac Corp.  
Miller, Merlin  
Chubbick Fire Dept.  
Tinno, Harvey  
West, William  
Dynamac Corp.

The meeting opened with a brief review of the activities of the past month. On December 9, 2003, Fred Judd (BLM), Don Gossweiler (BLM) and Buck West (Dynamac) meet with the GIS staff at Idaho State University to discuss their fire modeling work for Power County. The ISU staff provided the final results of their model. The major point of discussion was the impact that CRP lands might have on the fire model. Mark Love received the Three Rivers RC&D fire department report on CD.

Buck West handed out an updated version of the eleven Wildland fire issues for Power County. These issues had been sent out for team review on December 4, 2003, as part of the draft hazard section. There was only one minor comment on the section regarding power poles and lines being values at risk to wildland fire. The section was revised to incorporate the comment.

One of the members noted that the NRCS was scheduled to update their CRP map in 2004 and that some of the areas we had shown on the current map were no longer in the program. Mark Love and Buck West pointed out that the current map had been provided by the NRCS and that it was the best information we had. If the NRCS updates their map in 2004, then the plan should be maintained to reflect the new information. With the acquisition of the two reports from ISU and Three Rivers RC&D, the hazard section of the County plan can now be completed and published to the County web site.

The team then prioritized the issues by rating each issue as having a High, Medium or Low impact on each of the three plan goals for 1) Protection of life, 2) Protection of property, and 3) Protection of resources.

The team suggested a mitigation measure be added to issue 11 to request grants to fund inspectors for fire and building code inspections.

Buck West then presented with the format and an example for the mitigation actions in the plan. Buck pointed out that the actions did not need a lot of detail, but in enough detail so that it would be clear what was proposed and who had the lead responsibility for the action. The bolded organizations in the action indicated those organizations that had the lead for implementing the action and the other organizations were needed to fully implement the action. The members of the team agreed to take specific issues and draft the mitigation actions according to the proposed outline. Buck West requested that the

draft sections be returned to him by December 30, 2003, so that the plan could be ready for Commissioner and public review by mid January 2004. Team members were encouraged to add any additional mitigation actions under their issue of responsibility they might develop as they prepare the mitigation action narratives.

Responsibility for draft sections is as follows:

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Mitigation Issue</b>
Mark Love	1.Power County is not fully covered by fire protection districts and the districts that are present in the county are not fully coordinated together.
Hans Hayden	2.Power County has a large amount of land in the CRP increasing fuel loads beyond what would normally occur on tilled farmland.
Jeff Bass and Buck West	3.Power County volunteer fire departments are having difficulty meeting standards or requirements pertaining to: Training, PPE, Communications, Equipment, Apparatus and Facilities.
Mark Love and Harvey Tinno	4.Power County has a limited communication network with some portions of the county without any communication coverage at all.
Fred Judd and Don Gosswiller	5.Power County has numerous county roads, infrastructure, communication sites, developments and communities that require hazardous fuels reduction.
Ken Fagnant with help from VFDs	6.Power County has limited fire station locations and equipment that result in poor response times to fires in outlying portions of the county
Jeff Bass and Buck West	7.Power County citizens have had limited firewise education, information and awareness with regards to wildland fire.
Mark Love	8.Power County has limited sources of water for fighting wildland fires and many of those sources are vulnerable to disruption of service in the event of a wildland fire.
Mark Love	9.Power County has no comprehensive inventory of homes and values at risk in the event of a wildland fire.
Mark Love and Ken Fagnant	10.Power County Developments/subdivisions/homeowners are without emergency wildfire plans or other emergency plans in place.
Ken Fagnant and Mark Love	11.Power County lacks defensible space and fire resistant building materials in some developments and at private homes.